1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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Everything that can be digested is eaten, but nothing is done with bone or shell. When the Malays were trading with the natives the shell was exchanged for Malay products.

A man who goes turtle harpooning usually takes three or four men with him to paddle the canoe. He is considered the leader, but helps with the paddling while looking for turtle. The canoe goes beyond the breakwater out into the open sea. Along the sand beaches a goodly number of these animals can be found swimming in to shore to lay their eggs. When the head of the turtle is sighted all the oarsmen paddle as rapidly and silently as possible. They hold their heads and bodies down as low as possible so as not to be seen. When the canoe gets within range the harpooner articulates his harpoon to his spear-thrower and aims it just back of the turtle's head. If he strikes, the turtle dives, taking the head of the harpoon with the rope following to the sea bottom. The rope is held on to if it is possible; if not, it is picked up again when the animal rises sufficiently to bring the rope within reach. When the turtle comes up for air he is sometimes speared again, once more goes down, and the rope again held. When the rope becomes slack and it is felt that the turtle has tired itself, a man jumps overboard, puts his hands at the side of the turtle and attempts to turn it on its back. When he has it in this position the other men pull up on the rope. They catch hold of the turtle's legs and pull it on board. It is then hit on the head with a club. This has to be done carefully because a bite in a vulnerable spot would probably result in death.

Eggs of three species of turtle are eaten. Buckingham and Arnhem Bays are supposed to furnish the largest supply. Nests of crocodiles are sought out along the swampy river banks and their eggs gathered and eaten.

Sharks and crocodiles are harpooned, but usually speared. The backbone of a crocodile is chopped in back of the hind legs to sever the tail and to prevent its striking the hunter. When a sting ray is speared its tail is held in the mouth to prevent the fish's barbed prong from striking the spearsman while he is killing it.

The shallow rock bottoms along the seacoast or the white sand bottoms of the long low beaches where the water is knee to waist deep are the favorite fishing places. A spear-thrower is nearly always used with a fish spear.

Poison is sometimes used to stupefy fish, which then float in the water until gathered in. Dangi, an unidentified vegetable product, is

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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226 278 macerated and placed in the pool. Some of the writer's informants claim that a poison grass is used similarly.

252 753 A fish is cut in halves the long way and cooked immediately because it is believed that if a bit old when eaten it causes leprosy (but see Magic, page 207).

252 226 Oysters, periwinkles, and the many varieties of bivalves gathered by the women are cooked on the shore at the spot where they are collected. A fire is made over stones and the shellfish put on the hot stones and embers. The shells open or crack and the flesh is removed and eaten by the women or placed in small receptacles to be carried home to the men.

222 [136] Honey is gathered by both sexes, but usually by men. When a hive is discovered in a hollow tree that is not too large the tree is cut down and the trunk split open. The honey is usually eaten where found. Gathering honey is a painless task in Australia because the native bees are stingless. The honey is often put in a water-tight basket, mixed 272 with water and drunk as a beverage. It is never allowed to ferment; 273 the natives have no intoxicating drink. The wax is formed into a 237 ball and put in the men's baskets to be used in the construction of various implements.

222 252 Pandanus fruit, ripening about August, is cut up into fine pieces and cooked. The small cabbage palm is gathered about the same time, the whole trunk of the plant being cooked and beaten on a log, and the glutinous product eaten. Spear grass is chewed by the children as well as the other people.

222 Cycad palm nuts are gathered from the center of the trees by the women with the aid of a forked stick placed against the trunk to make a rough ladder. The nuts are knocked off with a club if they are 252 too high to reach. The outside skin is removed and the kernels are placed in a large basket which is submerged in a fresh-water pool and allowed to remain several days until the poisonous qualities of the green fruit are removed. Sometimes the women first heat the nuts, thus reducing the time for soaking them.

222 Several varieties of tree grubs are eaten. Both men and women gather them. They select trees which have the proper indications upon them, split open the trunk, and remove the grubs which are washed and eaten raw. They look much like the entrail of a fowl and taste much like a snail.

The nests of all the larger birds are robbed and the eggs eaten. During the proper season the various sea birds lay their eggs in great

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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778 and present to his relatives as reminders. The power which these relics
775 possess is due to the soul of the dead following the bones. The soul is
765 a true or totem-well warro. It listens from the totem well and comes when it is needed for an avenging expedition or to help its possessor in time of trouble. Any account of a clan feud is always filled with the
[789] use of these relics. Usually, when a maringo expedition is starting, a magical ceremony is gone through by the avenging group in which the bone of the dead plays the central rôle and decidedly helps to a successful conclusion. The gondjurma or killing stick used by the black magician to puncture the heart of his victim has great power, first, because it is associated with the dead body, second, because it is believed that the souls of the victims cluster about the point, and third,
[438] because it gains power by passing through the hands of a great number of men as it is traded from clan to clan and from tribe to tribe. The soul which adheres to this magic is also the Wongar one. It is like a friend to its possessor and he is its master. All of these souls are in or
[787] on the stick and can be called for help in hunting or fishing. They will also come to a man when he dreams. They will help foretell the future for him. If he is to be ill, he will feel something pricking him like the end of the stick. If good things are going to happen, one of the souls will come and tell him. If a stick is supposed to have killed a large number of men, all of the souls are supposed to be with it, but actually they are looked upon as one, and it is not so much an individual soul as a kind of diffused power or mana. A killing stick can be in the possession of a magician, or he can give it to an ordinary man who is one of his friends. Such a stick is always kept wrapped in paper bark and covered just as though it were a totemic emblem or ceremonial object and must not be subjected to the profane sight of women or the uninitiated.

778 When a man wishes to obtain its power to help him in hunting he
775 scrapes off pieces, chews them and swallows them the night before
224 the hunt. Immediately afterwards he shuts his eyes, says nothing, and
226 goes to bed. Next morning he utters not a sound and goes out with his spears looking for game or for fish. "Those souls which the stick killed before this have gone into the water or out into the bush and they have stopped the fish and game so that they can be found. When the man arrives he sees a few. He spits in the water (he is fishing) and a lot of fish come there. He spears one fish and when he spears the
778 one all the rest go dead as if you had poison in the water."
775 If he were hunting kangaroo it would be impossible for him to miss,
224

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but he could kill only one, even though there were a herd of kangaroo there. The taboo of silence is placed on the man from the time he eats the gondjurma shavings until he is successful in the hunt "because it means you have the soul inside you and when you spit it goes out into the water. You can't talk or it would send him out before."

"One time," said an informant who had in his possession a killing stick he intended using, "I was down at the creek trying to catch fish. When I got there I saw Bang-gi-la. He had one of these sticks with him. He was ready to try it when I got there. He had not used fish poison. I looked at the end of the stick. It had been scraped. While I stood there the fish came to the top and were dead. I am going to try mine."

The dry heart's blood can be used in the same way and the magical process is exactly the same. "Wet blood is no good because it makes you sick. When you take wet blood you must keep it until it gets dry."

The stick insect, a creature which looks much like a praying mantis and is one of the minor totems among the western clans of the Dua moiety, is associated with the killing stick primarily because it has a stick-like shape. It is believed that dead souls are about it, and at times it is called wan-djuk by the western peoples, which means black magician. Its correct name is war-a-la war-a-la. It is believed that the warala warala sometimes helps sneak up on people and kill them. There is an ambivalent attitude taken toward this creature. The natives play with him when they see him hanging sluggishly to a limb, laugh at him, treat him rather roughly, yet in their more serious moments they speak of his association with black magic.

The power of the black magician and his technique and the power of relics used to harm one's enemies (a variety of black magic) find their source in the sacredness of the dead. It is the mana of the dead which gives this power to magic and which *is* this power. To the living, the greatest and most intense dysphoria which finds expression in the life of man is death. The more dead souls that cluster about the evil point of the killing stick, the more power the killing stick possesses; a punitive war expedition assures itself of success by the magic clustered in the power of the bone relic because the soul is with it. The ordinary living animal or fish is killed immediately by the magical power of the killing stick because the soul of the dead is associated with it. The dal of the magician is the dal of the dead. The relics express this same power because they are associated with the dead. A relic cannot kill, but it can remove many of the traits of the living

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929)1937
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nary netting-stitch technique. The fiber string is tied instead of looped. The net has about a one-inch mesh and is formed out of one piece of string.

Fish Traps.—The Murngin possess several types of fish traps. One type is built at the mouth of a small tidal stream which at high tide is completely covered with water and at low has only the normal small brook flowing down it. A V-shaped trap is made: two arms of stone are piled closely together; sticks are placed where the arms come to a point, and a kind of mesh fence is made which allows the stream to flow through but prevents the fish from escaping. When the tide is up the fish come in and remain until it is too late to swim over the rock barrier.

A second type of fish trap is made to catch larger fish where small rivers flow into larger rivers. A fence is made at the mouth of the small river by driving sharpened sticks into the mud in a solid row except for an opening in the middle. When it is night the natives stand over the opening and listen until they hear several schools of large fish enter chasing minnows. They cover the opening with prepared paper bark and place piles against the bark. They go back to camp and wait until morning. When it is daylight they come out with extra large fish spears and jab them into the pool. The catch is usually large.

The Murngin also possess a separate type of trap to catch minnows in the swamp lakes. A man walks out into the swamp for a distance of about six feet and pulls out the ferns, moss, and leaves to construct a channel about four feet wide back to the edge of the pool. The channel is continued into the more solid land; it is graduated into a funnel shape for about three feet until it is only six or eight inches wide for a distance of about two feet of its length. It is then dug deeper to form an incline which drops to a foot and a half on the land side. A hole about four feet in diameter is excavated to a considerable depth at this end of the channel.

At the beginning of the funnel at the edge of the lake, sticks are put over the water, and grass is spread on top of them. At the end of the funnel a small waterfall is made by the sudden drop in the channel; a loosely woven basket is placed here across the stream so that the water falls into it. The basket is held in place by three sticks pushed through it and into the ground.

The man stands with his legs across the large hole at the land end of the channel (the narrow end of the funnel), and with a piece of eucalyptus bark throws the water behind him and out of the hole. In this way a current is made in the swamp water which the minnows follow. They get into the fast current and are caught in the basket. Literally thousands of them are caught daily. Both men and women construct and use these traps.

If luck is fair, several bags about one foot deep and eight inches wide will be well filled in an hour. Frequently a row of six to eight traps will be seen scattered a hundred yards apart along the edge of a swamp.

1: Warner E-5 (1926-1929) 1937
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Usually when the trap is to be used an old man goes out into the swamp and stirs the fish up by walking around in the morass of ferns and moss. While he does this he feels with his toes in the mud and water at the roots of the fern trees for small fresh-water turtles and prawns.

6. Other Implements

Digging Stick.—The digging stick is used only by women and carried by them. It is normally about four feet long, but varies from three to six feet. It is made of ironwood and is sharpened at both ends. It is used by the women to dig for yams, roots, small lizards and marsupials. They also use it as a weapon in a camp brawl.

Fire Drills and Fire.—The only means of making fire possessed by the Murngin is the fire drill. The drill is composed of two parts, a hearth and a drill stick. The latter is carved into a cylinder, and the former is a rod flattened on one side and convex on the other. The normal length of both drill and hearth is two feet, but sometimes reaches three feet. The hearth is about one-half to one inch wide.

A small hole is cut in the hearth and an incision made so that when a spark is formed by the friction of the whirling drill it may be tipped out quickly. The drill stick is frequently incised with parallel lines. Both pieces are covered with red ocher.

When fire is to be made, dry paper bark is crumbled and formed into a small ball which can be held in the palm of the hand. A tiny bit of charcoal is placed in the hole in the hearth. The fire-maker squats over the stick, holding it in place with his feet while he whirls the drill with his hands. The end of the drill in contact with the hearth is slightly rounded; intense friction is created by rubbing the charcoal against the dry wood of the hearth. When a spark appears it is dumped into the ball of paper bark and blown on by the native or swung back and forth in the wind until the paper bark has caught fire.

Fire sticks are the permanent equipment of both men and women and are nearly always found in the personal baskets of each. They are not used, however, every time a man wishes to make a new fire, for fire brands of the inner core of a pandanus which burns like punk are usually carried by the men when they go on journeys.

When fire is to be used for cooking larger game such as emu, kangaroo, dugong, and turtle, a slight hole is excavated in the ground. Round smooth river stones about the size of a man's two fists are gathered and placed in the fire in the shallow pit. Sticks are put on top of them so that the fire continues burning. Dampened paper bark or green leaves are then placed on the fire. Large chunks of meat are put on top of the green leaves, then an upper covering of leaves and paper bark is added to prevent the direct contact of the fire from burning the meat and also to help steam the food. The hole is covered with sand so that a kind of earth oven has been made.

3: Mountford E-5 (1948) 1956 OI17 Murngin OI17

*773 825 *532 along the bottom of the lagoon. Panel *b* deals with the time when the wet-season floods submerged a hive of wild bees near the totemic place of the tortoise. Many of the bees were drowned and both they and the honey floated on the surface of the water. The dots represent the drowned bees, and the diamonds the honey from the submerged hive. The patterns on panels *c* and *d* are the leaves of the spike-rush, *norik* or *rukia*.

[227] The parallel white lines on *e* symbolize the fish trap constructed by *Laitjun*,[40] a type of trap still employed to capture a fresh-water fish called *paipinja*.

(5) Fish

The Shark, Mana, at Blue Mud Bay

When the *dua* shark, *Mana* (tiger shark, *Galeocerdo* sp.) was a man he tried to establish a camp at Arnhem Bay, but was speared by *Borolo-borolo*[41] because the latter did not want any strangers near him. *Mana* ran across country to Blue Mud Bay, transformed himself into a tiger shark and tried to live in a fresh-water swamp. But it was far too shallow for his comfort, so he travelled to the sea coast, where he met an old man tiger shark with whom he has lived ever since.

[824] *Mana's* body is now a large white-barked eucalyptus tree in the swamp where he first tried to live. *Mana* the shark continues to live in the sea. This apparent contradiction is not unusual, p. 33. A carved figure, Pl. 132A, illustrates this myth.

Plate 119B pictures the totemic swamp of *Mana*, near Blue Mud Bay.* At *a* is the tiger shark, *Mana*, and at *b* his companion. The wavy lines at their tails symbolize the wake.[42] In the upper and lower panels, the squares[43] on either side of the sharks indicate the fallen leaves of an unidentified palm tree floating on the surface of the water.[44] At certain times of the year the aborigines make a [226] fish trap by blocking the entrance of a watercourse leading into the swamp with these leaves, and driving the fish into it.

Turtles and Fish

Plate 119C depicts the ocean.[45] The upper and lower left-hand panels *a* and *b* show two *dua* green turtles, *gariwa*, in the rough water indicated by the groups of curving lines. On the lower right at *c* are two seagulls, *nurula*, in flight, two dolphins, *injapana*, and two conch-shells. The cross-hatched object on the left of this panel is a trepang. Above this group at *d* is an attempt to depict a water-spout, *bojunga*. These are not uncommon in the Gulf of Carpentaria during the [132] monsoon season. On the upper right at *e* are two fish, and two turtles eating sea-urchins. The groups of curving lines indicate rough water.

40. Engraved pipe, Fig. 60D.
41. See bark painting of *Borolo-borolo*, Pl. 110A.
* Reproduced in *Australia: Aboriginal Paintings—Arnhem Land*, 1954, Pl. XVIII.
42. This symbol is often used in the art of north-eastern Arnhem Land, e.g. Pl. 115C.
43. These symbols are used on carved figure of the shark, *mana*, Pl. 132A, B, C.
44. The *mata* design of the *dua djapu*, language group, of Blue Mud Bay, Fig. 64A.
45. Interpretation by F. D. McCarthy.

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
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which is very far removed from the general picture of the Australian aborigine. 813 824

As the coast is approached, the country often becomes flat, and takes the form of wide plains through which the rivers flow sluggishly. On their estuarine reaches the rivers break up into innumerable arms, creeks and backwaters which are fringed with dense walls of mangroves. These brackish tidal reaches intersect the coastal plains, which are periodically flooded, becoming shallow lagoons which soon dry up, and leave miles of bare mud. This dries out and cracks so that it presents a tessellated appearance, and is often encrusted with deposits of salt. The estuarine reaches, tidal arms, and flood plains, yield very large quantities of food—chief of which are fish, for the capture of which many very specialised methods have been developed in Arnhem Land. Shellfish (*maipal*), including *laitjin,* (the wood-boring shipworm, *Teredo*) are also obtained in quantity in the mangrove zone. The shellfish are gathered at low water and *Teredo* are extracted from sodden logs uncovered at low tide, by splitting these with an axe and pulling them out by hand. 133 136 226

There are two well-defined seasons in Arnhem Land, the wet, or north-west monsoon, and the dry or south-east season. The "wet" extends from about December to March or April, when the wind is generally in the north-west quarter. During this period most of the annual rainfall—about 40 inches—occurs. The "dry" season extends from about April to November. At this season little rain falls except in far North-eastern Arnhem Land and for much of this period the wind blows steadily from the south-east. 132

This division of the year into two strongly-contrasted seasons has an important influence not only on the food supply of the people but also on their movements and occu- 221 805 813

602 they stand in a particular relationship, and for *yiritja* to
614 reciprocate for *dua*. The foregoing account applies also to
616 the organisation of most communal enterprises such as
[226] large-scale fishing drives, where the technique is related to local conditions, and therefore has a localised background. In such cases the practice is regarded as traditional, as a part of the pattern or heritage which has been passed to the clan by its founders, the totemic ancestor or ancestors, and which is therefore the special right or privilege of its mem-
[628] bers. Such traditional rights are invariably recognised and respected by other clans and are rigidly enforced, so that any violation may lead to punitive measures and even result in an inter-clan feud. And since the procedure is well understood by all participants, differences or disputes rarely, if ever, arise, and control or authority is not apparent. Most of these enterprises run so smoothly that only those who know the people and understand the social organisation would be aware of the identity of the man in authority.

224 At the conclusion of a hunting "drive" or grass burning
226 operation, or after the completion of a communal fishing
602 expedition, the game or fish is divided equally among those who took part. The group will then often sit down and cook or partially cook the food before taking it back to camp, when it is again sub-divided by each of the people according to his or her own family or kinship obligations.

224 While the burning of the grass yields an appreciable
[136] amount of animal food, of which the most important are kangaroos and wallabies among larger quarry, and such small game as bandicoots, opossums, "goanna" or Monitor lizards (*Varanus*), and snakes—it also has the effect of destroying the tops of food plants, which can then no longer be detected by the women. Burning must, therefore, be

carried out locally and under close control, so that the "grass burn" season conducted by each horde, or hunting group, is prolonged sufficiently to yield its full food potential over a period of weeks or months, without waste.

By the time the burning of the grass has been completed, another phase in the cycle is reached. The group may now follow the watercourses, which are gradually drying up, and employ the special fishing methods which tradition (backed by a long period of trial and error) has established, as being appropriate to the area and to the season. They secure fish, freshwater tortoises and snakes, by swimming "drives" and by the use of dams, weirs, traps, nets, and special poisons containing chiefly *rotenone*, *saponin* and *tephrosin*, which, as the volume of water becomes restricted, can now be used effectively to stupefy the fish. One of the most effective of the fish poisons used by these people is *moiyoŋo* (*Tephrosia leptoclada*)* a leguminous plant with a root shaped like a small parsnip. This plant, of which specimens were examined at Rothamstead Experimental Station (Herts. England) was found to be highly toxic in solutions of 1%. Later again, the groups which have been hunting independently during the early south-east season, will converge on the few deep permanent lagoons, where the camps increase in size as they are augmented by other groups of people who have been similarly engaged in nomadic hunting.

At this time the chief food of the natives inland will be *ŋarn*, the fruit of the Cycad Palm (*Cycas media*), which in this area yields very large quantities of food. In coastal

*A second species of *Tephrosia* hitherto undescribed, also called *moiyoŋo*, collected during the expeditions in Arnhem Land on which this work was carried out, has since been named *T. Arnhemia* by Mr. C. T. White (Government Botanist, Queensland).

137 zones, *rakai*, the corms of the Tall Spike Rush (*Heleocharis*
262 *sphacelata*), to which reference has already been made,
form the staple food. At the same time, communal fishing
● 226 drives—almost the only large scale hunting activity in which
476 men and women work together—are organised. Most other
communal enterprises, except those of a ceremonial nature,
are carried out by groups of men or of women working
[687] independently. In most cases the actual procedure follows
[554] so closely a traditional pattern that little actual leadership
[602] is required and this is generally accepted as the responsibility of the most senior and experienced of the older men who stand in the correct kinship status to the group in whose territory the hunting "drive" is carried out. Because these methods are traditional and are therefore regarded as a recapitulation of a pattern laid down by the ancestral culture heroes, the leadership is nominal and generally unobtrusive.

592 Each family—the group consisting of a man and his wife or wives and their young children—lives as a separate unit within the camp. It generally makes its own hut, shelter or breakwind according to the season, but the essential thing is that its life is centred around its own fireside, and that each family group cooks its own food, and lives as an independent and self-contained group within the horde. As a rule only one regular meal is eaten in camp. This is at night after the people have returned from the day's hunting.

591 There is no single women's camp, and up to the time of
593 marriage a girl remains with her parents and shares with
883 her mother the work of gathering vegetable food, and of food preparation, the making of bark houses and the getting of wood and water. But in the case of a boy, after commencement of his first initiation rites, at about the age of puberty, he leaves the fireside of his parents and goes to live in the SINGLE MEN'S CAMP.

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943)1949
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The man is the hunter and on him falls the responsiblity of providing the bulk of the animal food.

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Plate 7. An Arnhem Land hunter returns with a Red Kangaroo, known throughout most of this territory as *kārristjāmbāl*, earning for himself the coveted title of "*tjāmbait*".

Plate 8. A communal fishing drive with nets near the Liverpool River, North Central Arnhem Land. Communal enterprise is a feature of aboriginal hunting and fishing, the proceeds being shared among the participants as soon as the "drive" is finished.

226

[p. 58(c)]

9: Thomson E-5 (1935-1943) 1949
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184 424 614 the free use of certain elements, because they are regarded as the special prerogative of one clan or group of clans. This applies most strongly to matters which relate to clan totemism, but in material culture it may extend even to such [226] things as the technique of fish capture, the right to practise some specialised method of fishing, such as the *gorl*,[32] which have been developed in adaptation to peculiar local conditions and which are regarded as the exclusive property of the members of one clan or group of clans, who alone have the traditional right, not merely to fish in one territory, but even the exclusive right to practise the technique itself. In the case of the *gorl*, which is one of the most specialised methods of fish capture found anywhere in the world, this can easily be explained, for the technique is used only in one area on the Glyde River where it is localised in the territory of one or possibly of two, clans, and is therefore regarded as under protection of the *wänärr*, the ancestors of the clan or clans concerned.

184 424 [688] [685] [628] The restriction of the use of such traits and specialised techniques as the *gorl*, which are jealously guarded, and of which any infringement is bitterly resented and visited by vengeance, often leading to fighting and interclan feud, rests upon the belief that the heritage which its members have received from the *wänärr*, the ancestors of the clan, has been infringed, and that its solidarity has suffered damage thereby, rather than from economic motives such as the desire to monopolise food supplies, raw materials, or *gerri*, as with civilised man.

181 184 Even apart from these matters which touch on the solidarity of groups and which therefore restrict the distribution of a trait or process, the people are extremely

[13] [32] See Donald F. Thomson, *A New Type of Fish Trap from Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of Australia*, Man. 1938, No. 216.

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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nonchalantly remarked that when bush-rats spoiled most of the stores, they bartered fish, wallaby, and lily-seeds from nomads.

We saw white-washed aboriginal cottages built from locally burnt shell-lime, stones and ant-bed that had been standing for twenty years. Weird outlines of hands were in a number of bark huts, and an old nomad explained that when they 'go bush' they leave the mark of a hand in the house of a friend. Imprints are made by chewing moistened clay and spraying it from the mouth over a hand outstretched on the bark. When the hand is removed its outline remains in the centre of the white clay.

Indifferent land had been cultivated, and in good seasons yielded tapioca, sweet-potatoes, coconuts, and bananas. Nomads work in the gardens during the wet season and also collect bêche-de-mer from the mud-flats for export. Women weave baskets, fans, and trays from wild pandanus palm, and these are marketed for them by the mission.

At Goulburn Island I met some of the young Fijians who work on all these stations. Kolinio was a giant, a carpenter by trade and the son of a chief. He introduced me to the satisfying juice of the green coconut by gashing a lip in the soft shell of a green nut and handing it to me brimming with cold, exquisitely flavoured liquid. It has been inadequately likened to cold lemonade. Fijians get on well with aborigines and perhaps their colour is a link rather than a bar. They are born agriculturists, but need to unlearn a lot when they come from their fertile islands to desolate monsoonal Arnhem Land.

Milingimbi was at that time the end of the lugger trip. It is one of the many low scrub-covered islands and mud-flats known as the Crocodile Islands, yet within thirty miles of Milingimbi there is the densest Yulengor population in Arnhem Land. In 1918 this mission was begun as an extension of that at Goulburn Island. The advance seems

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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752 honour; sickness overtakes the offender, or the father may
325 spear him.
334
[053]

778 New spears, knives, axes, and canoes are sometimes
784 pronounced sacred and thereby impregnated by tabu.
411 Custom provides for the use of such articles in inter-tribal
224 presentations, and any responsible man may prepare them
[431] and paint his horde's totem on them. Nanyan, a youth of
[531] the Gerrkee horde, spent most of his time at Yirrkala, and I watched him make a spear and 'declare' it sacred. But the tabu could not be completed till he had killed with it, and when he speared a kangaroo it automatically became tabu to all but the men of his horde. After the meat had been eaten the oldest man present completed the ceremony by painting totemic symbols on it for Nanyan. He prized his spear and used it for a time in hunting; and because it had
[531] been ceremonially 'painted', the tabu was under control, and women and children of his own horde were allowed to
[562] eat meat killed with it, though on no account could the kill be shared with females from other hordes.

[431] Nanyan later presented his spear to a man of the Kumite horde who had no totemic or marriage link with the Gerrkee. This 'alien' appreciated the courtesy and used the spear freely in the hunt, but only the initiated men could eat the
[562] food, the women and children not being allowed to share in the kill, because their horde had no associations with the spear's totemic centre. Finally the spear was formally returned to Nanyan who put it to normal use in procuring food for himself and family.

784 On patrol I visited a horde camped among the casuarinas
●126 near Caledon Bay, and in the evening saw the men return
562 with a canoe loaded with fish. During the unloading I noticed that the women and children deliberately kept away and ignored the splendid haul, and I was told that the canoe

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and everything connected with it, including fish, turtle, and other food carried in it, were tabu to women and children. It appeared that two days previously the horde had migrated from the south and had brought a skeleton in the canoe, thereby rendering it tabu to women and children. It was another case of mumbakuta.

Sons and sons-in-law of the deceased person brought the fish ashore and ate them around a totemic well scooped in the sand. The leavings were carefully buried in the 'well' and the customary fire lit over them. The camp then went to the canoe on the beach, lit a fire on the sand, and taking leafy branches held them in the smoke and switched them over the canoe to hunt off the ghost of the dead man. Once the skeleton's influence on the canoe was removed, it was safe to travel in, and food could be eaten from it.

Skeletons are customarily carried in bark parcels and exert far-reaching influences, and 'mali', or ghosts, accompanying such bones must be placated. In an exchange I made with Yama for his father's bones (which I wanted to send to the Sydney Museum), I bartered several items for the complete skeleton in its bark cylinder with his horde's totemic symbols painted on the outside. Unknown to me, there were two powerful influences in the bark parcel, one in the bones and the other in the totemic symbols on the bark itself; for such bones laid a tabu on all they touched, just as they would have done if carried in a canoe, and the bark cylinder, by having a totemic sign painted on it, was sacred. Among the items I had exchanged for the skeleton was an axe, so it was agreed that for ceremonial purposes, this should absorb the tabu from the bones and also from the bark cylinder. Thereafter only the nearest relatives could touch it. To remove the skeleton tabu from the axe, Yama cut open a tree containing a bee's nest. Because of the tabu, only fully initiated men of the horde could eat it; but after the meal, the axe was painted to make it

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262 Variety in this otherwise uninteresting vegetable diet is provided by fish, birds, reptiles, and small animals. Women [962] fossick in jungles for land-snails and large white wood-grubs, [226] and when the tide is out they comb the mud flats and reefs [222] for mangrove worms, shellfish, oysters, lobsters, and crabs.

231 Some women train dingoes to help in their ceaseless search for small animals, reptiles, birds, and eggs. A dingo pup, captured in the bush, henceforth shares the family shelter, travels in the canoe, and is fed and petted with the children. They are often called 'son' by the owner and referred to by the relationship term used for the owner or his child. When [766] a favoured dog dies, it is buried and wept over in much the same way as a child. Women gash their heads and wail, one of the men conducts a mourning-song and dance, and I have seen them switch themselves with leafy twigs to drive off the canine ghost!

Dingoes breed freely with domesticated dogs, and most of the wild dogs in Arnhem Land now bear unmistakable traces of the white man's dog. However, the pure-bred dingo is by no means extinct, and there are many of these large, strong, good-looking brown dogs in Arnhem Land. When they are well fed (they seldom are), they grow to almost twice the size of a kelpie and are attractive in appearance, but they cannot bark. It seems certain that the dingo [174] migrated with the first aborigines, and Dr F. Wood-Jones, an authority on the dingo, says: 'The dingo and the Stone Age dog of Europe are practically identical and both but little removed from the Palearctic wolf stock from which they sprang. Man and dog were both migrants.'

773 Several Yulengor legends referred to the creation of dingoes by aboriginal Ancestors. In one story, it was said that having already formed the nuclei of several hordes, the Ancestors came to the grassy plains south of Arnhem Bay, where they made a magpie, an opossum, and two dingoes. Summer showers drove the birds into a tree, where they

15:Chaseling M-5 (ca. 1934-1936)1957
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made a shelter out of leaves, the opossums into a hollow tree, 773
and the dogs into long grass which they scratched into a heap and crawled beneath. And this has been the way of their kind ever since. Heavy rains later flooded the plain and approached the dogs' shelter, so one of them suggested that they leave for higher ground, but the bitch said: 'I cannot go, I am about to pup.' When the young dingoes were old enough to fend for themselves, they were sent off in pairs to Yulengor hordes, and the old ones crossed the hills to Port Bradshaw. Here the bitch suggested that they should make a canoe and sail away, but the dog took her into the hills where they and their kind have roamed ever since.

Toward the close of the dry season, swamps begin to dry 226 ●
and the fish to retreat to deep holes. It is the fishing season, and the hunter turns fisherman. Poison is made from the pulp of a fruit, which is sprinkled over the water, till the fish rise gasping to the surface. I noticed that Yulengor distributing the pulp shaded their eyes for protection against the fumes. Another poison was introduced by spreading crushed bark which turns the water black and some hours later causes the fish to float to the surface. Simplest of all methods, however, is to drag the heads of pandanus palms through the pool to stir up the mud and so suffocate the fish.

We were camped on the edge of one of the low scrub-covered coastal plains one morning during the King tides, when there was much running and shouting in the camp, as old men, women, and children left for the swamp where shallow water-holes had been flooded overnight and now held many small fish. Everyone brought bundles of dry grass to one end of the pond and threw them into a line from one side to the other. Next the hunters entered the water and slowly pushed the grass barrier to the far end of the pond. About forty pounds of small fish were gradually forced into shallow water and thrown out on the bank, amidst shouting and splashing.